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Subject: Defend Civil Rights and Environmental Justice, Protect Children and Farmworkers, and Oppose Pipelines

Defend Civil Rights and Environmental Justice, Protect Children
and Farmworkers, and Oppose Pipelines

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July 31, 2017

Critical information about the environment delivered weekly



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**TAKE ACTION: Defend Civil Rights
and Environmental Justice!**

As you may know, the Rachel Carson Council along with others, including the Faculty Forward Network, support saving the UNC Center for Civil Rights against the attacks from the Board of Governors. We specifically oppose the attempt to [ban the CCR's ability to litigate](#), which harms the marginalized community it serves, weakens the law school, and infringes on academic freedom.



Here's what's happening this week: [Join the Defenders of Civil Rights for an outdoor press conference in support of the UNC Civil Rights Center & its advocacy on behalf of vulnerable North Carolinians](#). Ted Shaw, director of the CCR, continues the legacy of Julius Chambers, its founder (both pictured above).

There will be an **Outdoor Press Conference Tuesday, August 1st at 11 AM - 1 PM** at the Center for School Leadership Development at UNC Chapel Hill, 140 Friday Center Drive, Chapel Hill, NC 27517

If you aren't able to be there in person, join us and the Faculty Forward Network in a **Twitter Storm on Monday, July 31st at 11AM ET:**

Tweet 1:

.@UNCCivilRights advocates on behalf of marginalized communities challenging discrimination. Let's stand together to #DefendCivilRights

Tweet 2:

.@UNC_System #UNCBOG is considering a proposal to prohibit @UNCCivilRights

from engaging in litigation. Shameful! Let's #DefendCivilRights

Tweet 3:

The fight for @UNCCivilRights is NOT over. Now more than ever we need to hold @UNC_System #UNCBOG accountable. #DefendCivilRights

**TAKE ACTION: Urge your Senators
to protect children & farmworkers**



A law proposed by Senator Tom Udall would ban chlorpyrifos, a brain-harming pesticide. Despite EPA scientist recommendation for the ban, the new EPA administrator, Scott Pruitt, did not take action on this earlier this year. This chemical harms children's brain development by reducing IQs, altering brain structure, and increasing the risk of learning disabilities. Banning it would be a major win for farmers, kids, and rural families.

Call your senator at 202-224-3121 (the capitol switchboard will connect you) and share this message: "My name is _____, and I am calling from [your town or city]. I

am calling to urge my Senator to co-sponsor S1624 to ban the brain-harming pesticide chlorpyrifos [pronounced: clore-pee-ri-foss]. It's time to protect children, farmworkers and families from this dangerous chemical."

[Read more at Pesticide Action Network](#)

RCC responds to FERC's Final Environmental Impact Statement on the ACP



On July 21st, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission released its long-awaited Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) about the proposed 600 mile, \$5.5 billion Atlantic Coast Pipeline (ACP). The draft EIS dismissed the short and long-term environmental, public health, and community safety impacts, and the final version denies the severity of the pipeline's effects as well.

As the United States shifts away from coal, natural gas has been touted as a safe and necessary bridge fuel to clean energy. Utilities, including Dominion and Duke Energy, chase high returns on building new pipeline infrastructure—what Rachel Carson called the “quick and easy profit.” In the process, they sacrifice communities, workers, and the environment. In its new report, coming in September

2017, the Rachel Carson Council debunks the many myths surrounding natural gas infrastructure—from fracking the Marcellus and Utica Shales to the proposed ACP.

[Click here](#) to check out what the Rachel Carson Council immediately identified as some of the many inadequacies with the FERC EIS.

This massive natural gas pipeline will run right through Native American communities

The Dakota Access pipeline demonstrated the ease with which federal and state government ignore the concerns of indigenous populations. The Atlantic Coast pipeline is yet another example of this, with Native Americans in both Virginia and North Carolina expressing their concerns about the 600-mile project that will cut through their sacred lands and waterways.



In North Carolina, of the eight counties the ACP is proposed to pass through, four have large Native American populations. However, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) did not conduct a comprehensive assessment of the impact of the pipeline on Native American communities. Opposition to the pipeline is growing among Native Americans, and tribes in both Virginia and North Carolina are voicing

their opposition and are prepared to join forces to fight it.

[Read more at Think Progress](#)

Contaminants in water are legal but still pose big health risks, environmental group says



Under the Safe Drinking Water Act, many contaminants in our drinking water are deemed legal, yet have been found to pose significant health risks. In an Environmental Working Group analysis of drinking water tests from 48,000 facilities in the U.S., 267 contaminants were present in water supplies at levels found to be unsafe by scientific studies.

Of the 267 contaminants, 93 were linked to an increased risk of cancer, 78 with brain and nervous system damage, 63 were associated with development damage in children and fetuses, 38 could cause fertility issues, and 45 were endocrine disruptors. Depending on where you are, the tap water may or may not be safe to drink.

[Read more at USA Today](#)

Pennsylvania judge halts pipeline construction after multiple problems

A Pennsylvania judge has ordered a two week halt on the Mariner East 2 pipeline project after multiple spills and complaints of well contamination. In a hearing last week, an environmental group described 61 spills of drilling mud, including into an exceptional value wetland, and drilling damage to wells that caused the evacuation of 15 families from their homes.



The Mariner East 2 is expanding upon an existing Sunoco pipeline that brings fracked natural gas from Ohio and Pennsylvania to a facility in Delaware County. Multiple groups, including the Clean Air Council, the Delaware Riverkeeper Network, and the Mountain Watershed Association, filed appeals last February stating that the state permits are inadequate and Sunoco's constructions plans were not thorough.

The judge's decision this week has halted construction until a full hearing occurs, which is set for August 7th.

[Read more at Bay Journal](#)

The surprising way climate change could worsen toxic algal blooms



As the weather warms, toxic algae blooms become more likely in places like The Great Lakes, The Gulf of Mexico, and other large bodies of water.

Researchers are saying that thanks to climate change, these blooms may happen more frequently into the future.

However, these blooms are not solely due to rising temperatures. Increased rainfall will cause more agricultural runoff and fertilizers to enter into waterways, bringing increasing amounts of nitrogen and causing more algae blooms.

A new study found that if we fail to decrease carbon emissions, nitrogen pollution in U.S. bodies of water could increase by 19% by 2100. The study underscores that water quality is not only linked to local factors, but to global factors as well.

[Read more at The Washington Post](#)

Bee Pesticide Ban Debate Could Arise in Next Farm Bill

31 Democrats are backing the Saving America's Pollinators Act of 2017, which would suspend the approval of neonicotinoid pesticides, common insect-killers. These pesticides might be harmful to honeybees, aquatic insects, birds, and other insects and animals.



The bill, co-sponsored by Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-Ore.), would ban these pesticides until EPA can determine that they are safe for pollinators. Blumenauer hopes the bill “will be folded into part of a larger initiative,” such as the next farm bill, which is in its planning stages now.

There is a scientific consensus that pesticides harm bees, but there is controversy over the role of neonicotinoids. Other factors contribute to declining pollinator health, such as loss of wild grasses and flowers, parasitic mites, and climate change. EPA is currently reviewing the impact that neonicotinoids have on pollinators.

[Read more at Bloomberg BNA](#)

**New debate on antibiotics:
Do you really need to take the full course?**



A group of physicians are challenging the decades-old idea that stopping antibiotics early is harmful for the patient. They say that this message was not based on sound science, and that it should no longer be recommended to patients.

Previous scientific logic goes that if a patient failed to take the complete course of antibiotics, some bacteria would be left behind and could develop a resistance to antibiotics. However, the physicians state that the idea of using all the antibiotics goes against the fact that overuse is causing the resistance problem and leading to the increase in antibiotic-resistant “superbugs.”

Many health professionals argue that it depends on the disease. For example, Sarah Fortune, a professor of immunology and infectious diseases at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, says that “for urinary tract infections and typhoid fever, studies have shown one day of drugs is sufficient.” However, for diseases like tuberculosis, not completing the treatment may put the patient at greater risk of worsening the situation.

[Read more at The Washington Post](#)

Unlikely Allies Push Bill to Solve California Drinking Water Crisis

Around 200,000 people in California's farm belt, comprised of low-income, primarily Latino towns, are facing constantly contaminated water supplies. Agricultural pesticides, arsenic, and other toxics are threatening their water and health.



The Safe and Affordable Drinking Water Fund, a bill introduced by state senator Bill Monning (D-Carmel), is a surprising joint effort by environmental justice and agricultural groups, who are usually pitted against each other when it comes to environmental regulations. The bill would create new a funding source for those unable to access safe drinking water, prioritizing assistance to low-income communities.

Clean water advocates feel confident about the bill's prospects, and are hopeful that it moves the state closer to ensuring safe and affordable water for all Californians.

[Read more at News Deeply](#)

EVENTS

Join the Defenders of Civil Rights for an outdoor press conference in support of the UNC Civil Rights Center & its advocacy on behalf of vulnerable North Carolinians.

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2. Join Beyond Extreme Energy on August 2nd, 2017 (tentative date) as they stage a sit-in at 2-3 key senators offices in Washington, DC. BXE's message is simple: take the lead in opposing a restoration of FERC's quorum, or face a growing rebellion. Congress should take at least one step toward replacing FERC with an agency dedicated to a just transition off fossil fuels. <https://goo.gl/5Rm1vR>

3. Attend the NAACP Energy Justice Training, August 17th-19th in Biloxi, Mississippi (Exact Location TBA). Register [here](#) to join frontline activists from across the Gulf Region and beyond for a 3-day Energy Justice Training and Strategy Session.

The Rachel Carson Council, founded in 1965, is the national environmental organization envisioned by Rachel Carson to carry on her work after her death. We promote Carson's ecological ethic that combines scientific concern for the environment and human health with a sense of wonder and reverence for all forms of life in order to build a sustainable, just, and peaceful future.

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